

# Maajid Nawaz becomes honorary associate of the NSS?

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The National Secular Society has welcomed the anti-extremism activist Maajid Nawaz to its list of prominent supporters by naming him an honorary associate.

Maajid Nawaz is co-founder and chair of [Quilliam](#) – a UK-based think tank which promotes integration, citizenship, religious freedom, and anti-extremism. He is also the Liberal Democrat's prospective parliamentary candidate (PPC) for Hampstead & Kilburn.

Maajid was at the centre of the recent Jesus & Mo cartoon controversy after he tweeted a picture of the cartoon, saying that, "as a Muslim, I did not feel threatened by it. My God is greater than that". Following his tweet, Maajid received death threats and vocal calls for his removal from the post of Liberal Democrat PPC from Mohammed Shafiq of the Ramadhan Foundation, Muslim commentator Mo Ansar, Bradford Respect MP George Galloway, and others. Maajid said of his action: "My intention was to carve out a space to be heard without constantly fearing the blasphemy charge, on pain of death".

Human Rights and a respect for individual liberty are matters close to Maajid's heart. His work is informed by years spent in his youth as a leadership member of a global Islamist group, and his gradual transformation towards liberal democratic values.

Having served four years as an Amnesty International adopted 'prisoner of conscience' in Egypt, Maajid is now a leading critic of his former Islamist ideological dogma, while remaining a Muslim. He now encourages inclusive citizenship-based participation of Muslims in the West, while seeking to synergize a respect for human rights with the civic liberal imperative to defend those in danger of being stigmatized by extremists of all stripes due to their personal choices.

On becoming an honorary associate of the NSS Maajid said: "I am proud to associate with the NSS and have no qualms in lending my name to the fine cause of British secularism."

National Secular Society president, Terry Sanderson, said: "We're delighted to welcome Maajid as an honorary associate. Promoting freedom of religion and belief, equality and fundamental human rights for all is central to our work, and Maajid's fearless commitment to these principles has been inspirational."

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